

Straddling the line: The Struggle of Being Multiracial in America

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Objectives

1. Be able to discuss how the “one drop rule” persists today and impacts multiracial individuals.
1. Be able to discuss how the racial identity development of multiracial individuals impacts their mental health.
2. Be able to identify 3 ways to support the mental health needs of multiracial individuals.





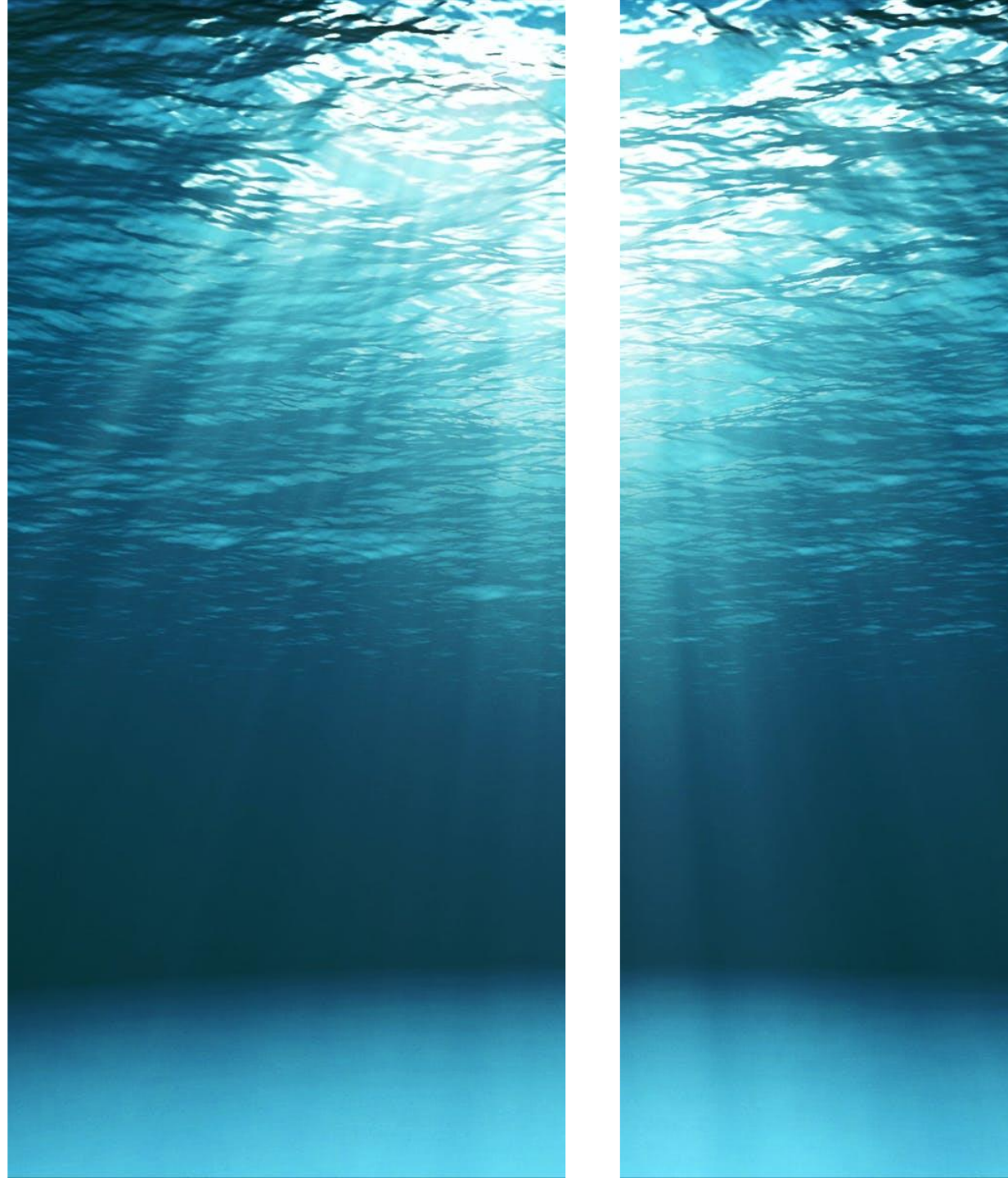
Definition:

Used to describe persons who are of two or more distinct racial backgrounds as a result of their parents or grandparents being of different racial backgrounds (Kelley & Root, 2003).



One drop rule

The one-drop rule is a social and legal principle of racial classification that was historically prominent in the United States in the 20th century. It asserted that any person with even one ancestor of black ancestry ("one drop" of black blood) is considered black.



- The United States operates from a mono-racial perspective.
- Racial identification is largely based upon physical presentation.
- Racial Invalidations/rejections
- Additional struggles when negotiating privilege and power related to race.

Societal Implications for the One Drop Rule



Renn's Patterns of Identity Development

1. Student holds a monoracial identity.
2. Student holds multiple monoracial identities, shifting according to the situation.
3. Student holds a multiracial identity.
4. Student holds an extraracial identity by deconstructing race or opting out of identification with U.S. racial categories.
5. Student holds a situational identity, identifying differently in different contexts.

(Renn, 2008)





- Have awareness of how racial identity may impact assessments and evaluation
- Seek to understand the social, political, and environmental influences of the multiracial individuals identity.
- Recognize the influence of intersectionality on a client's identity development.
- Provide opportunities for racial self identification.

Ways to Increase Cultural Competence when working with Multi-racial clients



- Seek clients definition of their racial identity and validate their experiences.
- Create space to wrestle with racial identification, without assuming it is the reason for seeking services.
- Seek opportunities to gain insight into the life experiences of clients.
- Recognize how your own biases may influence your conceptualization of your client.

Ways to Increase Cultural Competence when working with Multi-racial clients



THANKYOU



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